



## ***United States Attorney District of New Jersey***

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### **FORMER CITY OF NEWARK COMMUNICATIONS CLERK SENTENCED TO PRISON FOR TAX EVASION**

NEWARK, N.J. – A former communications officer with the Newark Police Department was sentenced today to five months in prison and five months of home confinement with electronic monitoring for tax evasion, United States Attorney Paul J. Fishman announced.

Leslie Wofford, a/k/a Wajeedah Abu-Bar, 48, of Hillside, N.J., pleaded guilty on September 17, 2010, to evading the assessment and payment of income tax by maintaining a fraudulent IRS W-4 form with her employer and failing to file a U.S. individual income tax return with the IRS. Wofford entered her guilty plea before U.S. District Judge Susan D. Wigenton, who also imposed the sentence today in Newark federal court.

According to documents filed in this case and statements made in court:

Wofford, a 22-year veteran of the City of Newark Police Department, filed a W-4 with her employer, the City of Newark, in 2001 – falsely claiming 99 exemptions from federal income tax withholding. Wofford admitted that she filed the fraudulent form so that no federal income tax would be withheld from her City of Newark paycheck and that she maintained the form on file with the city through November 2007.

In 2004, 2005, and 2006, Wofford received wages from the City of Newark in the amount of approximately \$45,065, \$48,099, and \$54,426, respectively, but failed to pay any federal income tax for those calendar years.

In November 2007, the City of Newark was directed by the IRS to nullify Wofford's false claim of 99 exemptions and to begin withholding from her paycheck. In March 2008, Wofford filed a second fraudulent W-4 with the City of Newark which falsely claimed the exemptions. In 2007, Wofford received wages from the City of Newark in the amount of approximately \$55,343 and failed to pay any federal income tax for that calendar year.

Wofford admitted that she received wages from the City of Newark in the amount of approximately \$65,846 in 2008 and failed to pay any federal income tax for that calendar year.

In addition to the prison term and home confinement, Judge Wigenton sentenced Wofford to three years of supervised release. Wofford also agreed to pay taxes due and owing to the IRS, plus interest and penalties.

U.S. Attorney Fishman credited special agents of IRS – Criminal Investigation in Edison, N.J., under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Victor W. Lessoff, with the investigation leading to today's sentence.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Sandra L. Moser of the United States Attorney's Office Special Prosecutions Division in Newark.

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Defense counsel: Daryl S. Pennington, Esq., Newark